

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 9

# Capitol Clarion

California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association

September 2015

## President's Message

By Bob Dreyer



As Summer fades and we enjoy a few hints of Autumn, I'm happy to say we had a very enjoyable July and August bringing new members into the Association. Seventeen new volunteers completed the "classroom" training and are now spending time with their mentors preparing themselves to "fly solo" as Capitol Docents. It is interesting to note that the class makeup was 8 ladies and 9 gentlemen which our living history director was happy to see. The class of 2015 is composed of highly motivated and very sharp individuals. I encourage you to introduce yourselves to them at the earliest opportunity and welcome them into the Association. I have the pleasure of mentoring two of the members of the new class, and I assure you that our future is in good hands.

The **Capitol Clarion** is published monthly by the California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association.

**Marti Dennis, Managing Editor**

Bill Geach, Editor Eternal

Deadline for announcements and articles is the **1<sup>st</sup> of the month.**

Articles can be e-mailed to the Editor at: **mdennis1@att.net**

Capitol Clarion CSCMVA Newsletter  
PO Box 19956  
Sacramento, CA 95819

We had a change to your Board of Directors at the last board meeting. Alex King, after many years of very active participation and leadership, resigned from the board. I'm pleased to welcome Randall Williams back to the Board of Directors and look forward to his wise counsel during the final months of my term as President. You may remember that Randall was elected to the board but had to "step down" to take care of some other business. Randall will finish the term Alex was elected to last January.

Due to a scheduling issue for use of the North side of the Capitol, we had to celebrate the 165<sup>th</sup> birthday of California a day early, on September 8<sup>th</sup>. My thanks to everyone who came out to set-up, serve ice cream and cake, and take down. We didn't "sell out" as quickly as we have in the past, as the crowds were smaller this year. But with the wonderful assistance of the Sacramento Banjo Band, everyone had a grand time. We started earlier than usual, as well, and were glad we did since the day heated up quickly. We gratefully thank Leatherby's Family Creamery for donating the ice cream and acknowledge the artistic folks at the Raley's bakery on Folsom Blvd. for the beautiful (and tasty) cakes.

Looking forward, Diane Rich and Patty Wood have been

putting their heads together and have come up with a Fall field trip / social activity for a visit to Benicia. I am sure it will be something nobody will want to miss. The Christmas decorating committee will be gearing up for an even more spectacular display this year. Don't wait to be asked to help; give Marilyn Thompson a shout if you want to be involved. Connie Clark has stepped up and volunteered to head the committee coordinating Camellia Day 2016. This is a great event, so contact Connie and secure a position on the Committee.

The year is swiftly drawing to a close which means new board members and the annual meeting. The Vice President, P.J. Jones, is tasked with leading the nomination committee and the planning of the annual meeting. This is an opportunity to do some of that important "behind the scenes" work, so let her know your availability, and she can put you to work.

If you are traveling, be safe. I'm off to New York and New England in early October and will bring back some interesting stories I'm sure.

~ **Bob**

## Sunshine Corner:



Since the last issue of the **Clarion**, cards have been sent to the following individuals:

**Bob Dreyer** – Thinking of You wishes upon making arrangements for hospice care for his mother

**Ken Butler** – Get well wishes as he recovers from minor eye surgery

**Elizabeth Giordano** – Get well wishes as she recovers from a recent hospitalization

**Jan Forbes** – Sympathy upon the recent loss of her mother

Please remember that If you know of someone who could use a word of encouragement, comfort, or get well wishes, please contact **Scotty Hodges** who thoughtfully expresses CSCMVA support on behalf of all our membership. Scotty can be contacted at [hashhogg901@yahoo.com](mailto:hashhogg901@yahoo.com) or by phone at 707- 425-1909.

## A Field Trip and Social Opportunity:

Please save the date of **Friday, November 6** for a day trip by chartered bus to **Benicia**. **Diane Rich** and **Patty Wood** are finalizing arrangements. The details, and an opportunity to sign up, will be sent out in early October. Until then, Diane and Patty want us to look forward to a relaxing bus ride, wonderful and interesting company, and tasty snacks to and from Benicia, with the ultimate end point a visit to some of Benicia's historic sites.

## Congratulations, Class of 2015!

On Thursday, August 20, 16 (of 17) new members were present to personally receive their diplomas and enjoy a congratulatory lunch hosted by CSCMVA. It was a great time to celebrate the classroom



accomplishments of all the new members. What a fun and interesting group of new docents with whom to share our Capitol experience! These new graduates are now working with mentors to finalize their training.

Many thanks to all of our members, CA State Parks staff and special guests who worked so diligently in various activities including interviewing prospective members, organizing materials for class members, serving as speakers and tour guides, and preparing refreshments for class participants.

Below is a group photo of all but one of our new members, along with interested CSCMVA members, in Governor Brown's office on August 20, 2015 – Graduation Day..



**Class of 2015 and Current Members of CSCMVA  
Governor Brown's Office August 20, 2015**

### Parking Pass Reminder:

Our preferred parking status as CSCMVA volunteers in the 10<sup>th</sup> and L Street garage needs to be renewed by **September 30<sup>th</sup>**, or members using this garage will be subjected to a much higher parking rate. Please remember to pick up your letter verifying CSCMVA volunteer status (at the Volunteer desk) and take it to the City of Sacramento Parking office.





## Did You Know....

By Clem Dougherty

(*Editor's Note:* This article represents the fifth in a series entitled “**The Rise of San Francisco as The Queen City of the Pacific.**”)

Did You Know...that the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacramento located at the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and K Sts. Sacramento, CA was built mainly with silver money from Virginia City? Yes, it's true. In our last newsletter we saw how William Ralston and the Bank of California used the money from the silver mines of Virginia City to build San Francisco. But just as the influence of Ralston and the Bank faded as the result of his untimely death and the run on the Bank in the early 1870s, a new group came center stage. They were the four **Bonanza Kings: John Mackay, James Fair, William O'Brien, and James Flood**. All of them came to California in the Gold Rush, and when silver was discovered in Nevada in the early 1860s, they turned their attention to the silver mines. The four of them held the majority shares in the Consolidated Virginia and California mines located at Virginia City. They also held the San Francisco–Virginia City connection together in that Mackay and Fair stayed at Virginia City providing hands-on management of the mines, while Flood and O'Brien remained in San Francisco managing the interests of the four on the Mining Exchange. The partnership was extremely successful in that each of the four became multi-millionaires enjoying the mine profits that have been described as follows: “incomparably the richest strike of precious metals in mining history,” “riches unparalleled in the 14 year history of the Comstock,” “the top had been pried off Nature's treasure vault,” “the richest hoard of gold and silver that had ever dazzled the eyes of a treasure seeker,” and “the wealthiest and most powerful mining combine ever seen in the West.” (see Lewis, Oscar, *The Silver Kings*, 1986 ed., pp.45,141,223, and authorities cited therein)



**John Mackay 1831-1902**

Of the four Bonanza Kings, the most interesting is John Mackay (pronounced: “Mack-ee”). Born in Ireland on November 28, 1831, Mackay came to California in 1851 to strike it rich in the Gold Rush. He panned for gold on the Yuba River, and failing to make it big in California, moved to Nevada in 1860. He met James Fair in Virginia City and while Mackay's business career soon became legend (at one point he made \$10,000 a day), it was Mackay's private life that attracts our attention today. While in Virginia City, he met **Marie Hungerford Bryant**, a young widow with a small child, Eva, by a prior marriage. Marie taught French in a local Virginia City school and also sewed for wealthy patrons in order to make extra money. It was Mackay who rescued Marie from a life of genteel poverty by marrying her in a ceremony performed by Fr. Patrick Manogue, pastor of St. Mary's of the Mountains in Virginia City and later first Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Sacramento. It didn't take Marie long to discover the good fortune (literally) she had married into. After the birth of their first child John, the family including Mackay, Marie, John, Marie's parents, and her sister took a trip to Europe where Marie decided that Virginia City was too noisy, dusty, and crude. She preferred to live in Europe, and so she did. Leaving Mackay behind in Virginia City, Marie in 1876 moved herself, her children (by now a second son Clarence was born) her parents and her daughter Eva to Paris where she remained for most of the next 25 years, returning to the US only once.

In Paris Marie purchased for a million francs a four story mansion which occupied an entire square just off the Champs-Elysees, adjacent to the Arc de Triomphe and spent another ¼ million francs to furnish it. Marie then set out to bring into her home European aristocrats, statesmen, musicians, singers, painters, sculptors, authors – the crème de la crème of European society. Money attracts, and Marie soon attracted all of Paris to her home. Marie was the first very rich

American to exile herself to Europe. Her expenses were enormous, and Mackay dutifully, and without complaint, paid them all.

In the meantime Mackay divided his time between San Francisco where he stayed at the Palace Hotel and Virginia City where he stayed at the International Hotel. He did not have a permanent home. Mackay lived a spartan existence and denied himself any type of luxury. He reportedly gave away over \$5 million dollars to people in need on the condition that his gift was to be anonymous. At one point there came a slack period when the Virginia City mines shut down for a while throwing hundreds of miners out of work. Mackay paid the entire grocery bill for all the miners unable to pay the bill themselves. People lined up in the streets in hopes that Mackay would pass by and give them a hand-out, and hand-outs he gave. There was such a dramatic difference between the lavishness of Marie's lifestyle and the simplicity of Mackay's lifestyle. Mackay despised his wife's new found European friends, and when he visited her once a year in Europe, he could not wait to return home to Virginia City and San Francisco.

There is a Sacramento connection with John Mackay. Mackay and Bishop Patrick Manoque were good friends, having known one another when both lived in Virginia City. When Manoque became Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento in the 1880s, he built the present Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. It was John Mackay who contributed a major portion of the funds needed to build the Cathedral. In other words it was silver money from Nevada that built the Cathedral. Just how much Mackay contributed, no one knows because Mackay wanted all his gifts to be anonymous. Today if you walk to the inside of the Cathedral on the south side, look up and you will see a stained glass window donated by St. Mary's of the Mountains of Virginia City. It's probably a good bet that the stained glass window is actually the gift of John Mackay.

On July 20, 1902 Mackay died of heart failure in London while on a business trip. He was 70 years old. He and the other three bonanza kings had kept the San Francisco / Virginia City connection together. In reviewing Mackay's life there is a certain nobility of character in John Mackay -- not because he was one of the richest men of his age but of the manner in which he lived his life. He certainly knew who he was and put that knowledge into practice: a simple man at heart, genuine, unassuming, and true to himself. A Class Act.

(Sources: Lewis, Oscar, *Silver Kings*, 1986 edition, pp.47-114; Fisher, Vardis and Holmes, Opal L., *Gold Rushes and Mining Camps of the Early American West*, pp.370-374 Breault, S. J. William, *The Miner Was A Bishop*, pp 108-109, 132; Rawls, James and Bean Walter, *California, An Interpretive History*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, pp.189-190)

## Holiday Music Program:

By Rachel Martinez



The annual holiday music program which includes various instrumental and choral groups playing Christmas and other holiday music in the rotunda at the lunch hour, is fast approaching. We have learned that entertainment slots are rapidly filling up, including some new performers and / or performances this year. If you know of any groups who are interested in performing, please contact Erin Renfree (Parks Supervisor) at 916-324-0319 (Monday through Thursday) or via email at [erin.renfree@parks.ca.gov](mailto:erin.renfree@parks.ca.gov).

On that same note (no pun intended), the Capitol Museum Singers will be performing their annual Sing-a-Long on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, and we would love CSCMVA volunteers to join! The Capitol Museum Singers are also looking for a piano accompanist. Please contact Erin if you, or someone you know, would be interested. Rehearsal dates and times will be forthcoming.



## Admission Day Birthday Party: Celebrating 165 years of CA Statehood September 8, 2015



Admission  
Day  
2015



## Rachel's Reminders:

- If you **need to cancel a prescheduled shift**:
  - Please contact Rachel at 916-324-0319 (Monday through Thursday) or the Scheduler's Desk at 916-324-2088 (Friday through Sunday) **if you need to cancel within 24 hours** of a previously scheduled shift.
  - Outside of 24 hours (more than 24 hours prior to your shift), you may remove your name through the online VicNet scheduling system.
- The **Lost & Found**, previously located at the CHP office, has now been moved to **Room 3030**.

## Conference of California Historical Societies:

CSCMVA is an organizational member of the Conference of California Historical Societies (CCHS). As such, interested members of our organization can participate in events held by this group. On the dates of October 15 – 17, 2015, CCHS is holding a Fall Symposium to explore the historical “wonders” of Shasta County. Working from accommodations in Redding, the symposium includes curator-led tours of Redding's Turtle Bay Exploration Park, Burney Falls, and a speaker, tour and dinner with the historians and citizens of Shingletown. There is also a “Nuts & Bolts” workshop to help with the management of operations in member organizations.

If interested, go to the CCHS website at [www.californiahistorian.com](http://www.californiahistorian.com). Registration is \$225 if submitted prior to the September 25 deadline and does not include lodging.

## Volunteer Spotlight

By Scotty Hodges

*Editor's Note:* The Spotlight feature will not appear this month. If contacted by Scotty Hodges, please provide her with information on your interest in serving as a docent at the Capitol, your personal history and life experiences prior to joining CSCMVA. This column offers a means to get acquainted with fellow members.

## Minutes of the CSCMVA Board - September 2, 2015

By Marylin Thompson, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by **President Bob Dreyer**. Bob opened the meeting by announcing the resignation of Alex King. Members Keck and Tyler, respectively, moved and seconded a motion to appoint Randall Williams to serve the remainder of Alex's term (December 2017). The motion was passed unanimously, and Randall took his place on the board. CSCMVA thanks Alex for his many years of very active participation and leadership with hopes that he will continue to lend his talents and capitol contacts to many future association projects.

Bob reminded everyone that parking passes must be renewed by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Treasurer's Report:** There was no report due to the vacation absence of Bob Dennis.

**Bookstore / Membership Reports:** Mary Geach reported that income from the month of July was a net \$5,922. The Bookstore ran out of copies of the California Constitution 6 months ago, but there is ongoing demand for them, so Mary obtained a quote for reprinting. The Board approved an expenditure of between \$700 and \$1,000. Mary also is requesting a quote to reprint the popular book which describes the Capitol museum rooms since we own the copyrights. 33 coloring books were sold last month. New docent, Marilyn Folker is a retired 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher who has brought many school classes to tour the capitol. She would like to work with Mary and has some suggestions for bookstore items. Mary reported that the name badges for new members are complete and are being mounted for our new members.

**State Parks Report:** There will be a Capitol Park training tomorrow.

### Continuing Business:

- Admission Day: Twelve people have signed up to help with Admission Day. Ten cakes have been ordered from Raley's, and Leatherby's has donated the ice cream. The suggestion was made that we send a letter to Raley's corporate headquarters to ask if they might donate the cakes which are \$33 each. The Banjo Band will provide entertainment.
- Training Class: 17 new docents have graduated and are starting their mentoring. They are a very sharp and eager group. Bob thanked the training class committee for doing a great job.
- World War II posters: Chris circulated pictures of 12 posters and asked those present to vote for their favorite six. The favorites will be passed on to Renato to make samples.
- Fall Social Event: Diane, Patty and Connie volunteered to do some preliminary planning for this event, at least as far as presenting the board with some specific choices. The event might be in early November.
- Penny Smasher: due to arrive in September and will be installed near the theatre. Question of whether to provide change is still to be determined.

### New Business:

- "Costume Marketplace": A discussion was held as to the various ways in which costumes, fabric, hats, trims, etc. which are available to share/sell could be advertised. 1) There will be a "show and tell" for new docents on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> and items could be brought then. 2) This could be a regular feature at the first rehearsal for every living history event. 3) There could be a space made for "ads" on the volunteer bulletin board next to the sign in desk. 4) a page could be added to our website for this. It was agreed not to add this to the tasks of the *Clarion* editor.
- Museum Day and Camellia Day: Chairs are needed now for these events as they happen early in the year after the new president takes office.
- Old Drapes from the Secretary of State's Office: Koren sent an email asking if CSCMVA had any use for the drapes which were replaced by us and which are stored in the custodian's vault behind Renato's office. They could be used with the Christmas decorations or as costume fabric. Marilyn and Jan will look into this with Maria.
- By-laws Committee: They have met and gone through each item in the by-laws – still have some questions they are looking into and will meet again in early Oct. They will present proposed changes at the annual meeting in January.

**The October Board meeting will be Wednesday, October 7 at 1:00 PM.**  
**All members are encouraged to attend.**

### Upcoming Events:

**Parking Pass Renewal:**

**Wednesday, September 30**



Board of Directors Mtg.:	Wednesday, October 7
CHHS Fall Symposium: (Redding, CA)	Friday & Saturday October 15 – 17 (Early Registration deadline Sept. 25)
Field Trip and Social:	Friday, November 6
Holiday Music Program:	December 1 - 23

**January 2016 will be the Annual Meeting**

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**To Use the Capitol Museum website, below: Copy the address to your web browser and then save the website to your list of "Favorites" or "Bookmark" it.**

<http://portal.parks.ca.gov/CapitalDistrict/CapitolMuseum/CapitolMuseumVolunteers>

**Volunteer Coordinator: 324-0319**  
**Rachel Martinez**

**Tour Guide Office: 324-0333**

**Scheduler's Desk: 324-2088**

**Capitol Tours daily 9 am – 4 pm, closed Thanksgiving,**

**Christmas and New Year's Day**